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| POLICY TITLE: Behaviour Policy |  |
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| Associated Policies: Safeguarding Policy Accident and Injury Policy |  |

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| *Young Star* mentoring coaches and mentors’ young people who have had difficulties in life both personally and socially, by guiding them through a training program of personal development. Young Star teaches them to be part of a team, encourages discipline, respect, self-worth and a deeper sense of community. Therefore, *Young Star* Mentoring expects all staff and volunteers to model positive, appropriate and respectful behaviour at all times that both reflects and represents its core values.**Policy Aim*** To provide a code of practice which will assist all staff in establishing and maintaining professional relationships and boundaries with the children/adults that come into contact with *Young Star*, other staff/volunteers, other professionals and partner agencies and funders.
* To provide support and guidance to staff/volunteers who use social media
* To identify what behaviours *Young Star* deems unacceptable including the ‘no alcohol, no drugs’ rule.
* To provide guidance on a code of behaviour that *Young Star* deems safe, appropriate and that minimises reputational risk of the organisation.
* To acknowledge the principles of confidentiality
* To alert staff/volunteers to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks.
* For staff/volunteers to know what is expected of them when building and maintaining professional relationships with partner agencies.

**Monitoring** This policy will be reviewed annually and revisions recommended to the organisations Executive Director This policy may also be reviewed in the following circumstances:* If operationally certain behaviours or issues are frequently dealt with that do not feature in this policy
* As required by the Charity Commission
* As a result of any other significant change or event or new government guidance
* Gaps identified or learning from serious incidents
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**Professional Relationships and Professional Boundaries**

**Non-Professional Relationships -** The adults and children that come into contact with *Young Star* have often experienced difficulties in life, as a result they may be experiencing mental health problems, low self-esteem or self-worth. There are many ways in which staff/volunteers could deliberately or inadvertently influence the people who have contact with *Young Star* or they could also use their position of trust to groom and abuse or to develop an inappropriate relationship and it is therefore important that we consciously maintain professional relationships at all times. Therefore, it is not permissible for staff/volunteers to enter into a non-professional relationship with the adults or children *Young Star* comes into contact with. Nor is it permissible for any staff/volunteer to have social contact Including through social media with any adult or child that is or has been part of the *Young Star* Mentorship programme. Staff/volunteers should approach *Young Stars* Executive Director if they feel concerned about any aspect of their relationship or a colleagues with a current or ex-user of the mentorship programme.

**What is a Professional Relationship:**  It is a relationship formed between two people, one being the recipient of a defined service and the other a member of staff/volunteer who provides part or all of the defined service: (a) The relationship is formed to meet the needs of *Young Star* users and not the service provider (b) In remaining professional, the staff/volunteer must remain objective with the aim of achieving a positive outcome for the Young Star user. Inherent within it is that both parties are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and as valued individuals. It is recognised that in practice it can be difficult to maintain professional boundaries and many situations/dilemmas will occur which are not specifically covered by this or any other policy. *Young Star* is committed to providing support to staff in these situations but this can only be done if the Executive Director is made aware that difficulties exist.

**Befriending:** Staff/volunteers should never overstep professional boundaries and confuse befriending with friendship. A friendship meets the needs of both parties, whereas befriending is a professional relationship which meets the needs of the *Young Star* user or previous user.

**Counselling:** Staff/volunteers should be aware of the difference between employing ‘counselling skills’ (active listening, empathy etc.) which are appropriate for all to use, and ‘being a counsellor’, which is not an appropriate role for anyone who is not qualified and working/volunteering in this capacity. Staff/volunteers should refer individuals to appropriate agencies/professionals who can provide specialised support.

**Providing Advice:** All advice offered by staff/volunteers should be as non-directive as possible and should provide options to empower individuals to make their own choices. If staff/volunteers are concerned about some behaviour or activity on which advice has not been sought (e.g. a potentially exploitative relationship or a situation where there is the potential for danger) they should initially discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consider whether it is appropriate to raise these concerns to the *Young Star* user in a non-judgemental manner, following safeguarding procedures if necessary [(see safeguarding policy)](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CSafeguarding%20Policy-%20Young%20Star.docx).

**Favouritism:** There should be no favouritism, or the appearance of favouritism, shown by staff/volunteers towards particular people they are supporting/assisting/mentoring. Whilst staff/volunteers may find some people easier to mentor than others, this should not be reflected in the amount or quality of attention offered.

**A Framework of Respect:** Consideration should be given as to how to engage with *Young Star* users, to ensure interaction always takes place within a framework of respect. Staffvolunteers should ensure that:

* They do not present themselves as superior
* They use tact, empathy and diplomacy in all contacts and interactions
* They are careful not to influence *Young Star* users with their own beliefs and values
* They adopt a flexible way of working with individual needs of *Young Star* users
* They are open and transparent with *Young Star* users if mistakes or errors are made.
* They consider diversity and individuality, respecting individual choices and preferences as so far as possible.
* Respect people’s rights to privacy
* Be careful not to prejudge, label or stereotype individual people or groups of people
* They do not use inappropriate language with *Young Star* users or colleagues e.g. referring to them by pet names, in terms of endearment, or in ways which are demeaning.

**Financial/material Transactions:** No financial transactions, buying, selling, exchanging or bartering should take place between staff/volunteers and *Young Star* users.

* Staff/volunteers must not lend their personal money or possessions to *Young Star* users nor must they borrow money or possessions from them.
* Staff/volunteers must not give or accept personal presents from Young Star users.
* Staff/volunteers should not accept any offer, or elicit offers of labour from service users e.g. cleaning staff cars
* Staff/volunteers should not use their own store loyalty card when shopping with *Young Star* users, nor benefit from ‘Buy one, get one free’ offers.
* Staff/volunteers should not discuss their own personal details or problems that are not relevant or appropriate.

**Relationships/Contact with Service Users Outside of Work:**

* Staff/volunteers must not allow *Young Star* users to visit their homes
* Staff/volunteers must not encourage *Young Star* users to develop relationships with their (the staff member’s) friends or family members
* Staff must not give service users their personal addresses or phone numbers including social media.
* Any social activities must be part of the *Young Star* mentorship programme. These should be documented including details of when and where the activity took place with whom and the purpose of the activity.
* Where a current or ex *Young Star* user is seeking advice or support they should be signposted to the appropriate individual or agency, for example their GP, community mental health team or social worker.
* Staff/volunteers are advised to approach the *Young Star* Executive Director if they feel concerned about any aspect of their relationship with a current or ex *Young Star* user.

**Keep a Record:** A written record of a broken or blurred boundary both towards and from service users should be kept in an appropriate file or book (to be agreed with the Executive Director) to ensure openness and consistency and assist in monitoring.

**THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY STAFF/VOLUNTEERS**

*Young Star* Mentoring recognises that social media sites and applications are an important and integral part of daily life and, if used correctly, can offer promote, advertise and create valuable charitable business opportunities. However it also recognises that these sites and applications can pose reputational and/or legal risks to staff/volunteers and/or *Young Star* users if not used correctly. The following guidance should be followed to ensure staff use [social media](https://communications.tufts.edu/marketing-and-branding/social-media-overview/) appropriately and avoid associated risks; a failure to comply with this guidance may in itself result in disciplinary action:

* Staff/volunteers must not use social media or social networking sites, such as Facebook or Instagram, to be ‘friends’ with current service users.
* In the event that a current or ex-user initiates personal contact with a staff member/volunteer, they should make no response other than to politely refuse that contact and promptly inform and discuss this with Executive Director.
* Maintain confidentiality of service users and other colleagues when using social media.
* Under no circumstances should any *Young Star* details or any photographs which may include images of Young Star users be posted via social media without their consent
* Avoid any postings or responses on social media which are bullying or harassing in tone towards other staff/volunteers or *Young Star* users
* Set privacy settings on their social media accounts to limit the information which is accessible by the general public
* Assume that everything they post could at some point be made public. Before posting, colleagues should therefore consider whether their comment or posted information is something they would want a fellow staff member, volunteer or *Young Star* user to read or see
* Report to the Executive Director any content on a social media site which breaches this policy including content which disparages or reflects poorly on *Young Star* Mentoring
* Remove any posting on a social media site which breaches this policy when required to do so by *Young Star* Mentoring.
* Co-operate with any investigation into a breach of this policy by *Young Star* Mentoring
* Raise work related complaints or concerns via the Executive Director or the [whistleblowing policy](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CWhistleblowing%20Policy.docx) and not on social networking sites.

The above is not an exhaustive list of the different types of inappropriate or unacceptable use, but is a guide only as to what types of activity and communications are to be avoided when communicating through social media sites.

**ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR and APPROPRIATE CONDUCT**

**Discussing Others/Gossip:** Gossip or hearsay should not feature as an aspect of the Young Star Mentoring culture and should be actively discouraged among both staff/volunteers and Young Star users. Therefore;

* Staff/volunteers should never share personal details about other staff/volunteers with *Young Star* users
* Staff/volunteers should never discuss other staff/volunteers with *Young Star* users except on issues relating to support
* Staff/volunteers should never discuss one *Young Star* user with another.

**Illegal or Inappropriate Activities:** Staff must not participate in any illegal or inappropriate activities e.g. buying stolen goods or allowing them to be kept on their person. Staff/volunteers must not collude with *Young Star* users by turning a blind eye to illegal/inappropriate activities or, in shared accommodation, to breaches of accommodation rules [(see mixed sex policy)](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CMixed%20Sex%20Policy.docx). Staff/volunteers should inform the Executive Director immediately of any incidents of illegal or inappropriate activity within the *Young Star* Mentoring Programme. All staff and volunteers must adhere to the following;

* Staff/volunteers must not consume alcohol when they are directly responsible for children or adults on a *Young Star* Mentoring activity and must not permit *Young Star* users to consume alcohol during activities.
* The use of illegal substances by staff/volunteers on *Young Star* Mentoring activities is unacceptable and they should not permit Young Star users to use such substances.
* Racist, sexist, homophobic or any other discriminatory remarks or behaviour is unacceptable from whatever source and must be challenged.
* All staff/volunteers should avoid swearing and discourage others from doing so
* If staff/volunteers have concerns about the actions of another staff member/volunteer then they should advise the Executive Director of their concerns.
* If staff/volunteers feel uncomfortable about talking to the Executive Director they can follow the [Whistle Blowing Policy](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CWhistleblowing%20Policy.docx) which is private and confidential.

**Disciplinary Action:** It is worth noting that the breaking or blurring of boundaries and professional conduct is potentially a disciplinary and/or legal offence and following this policy will not only constitutes good practice, but will also potentially serve to protect staff/volunteers in the event of disciplinary and/or legal action being taken. Staff/volunteers could also be referred to their registering professional body (if they have one) and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**PRINCIPLES OF CONFIDENTUALITY**

Staff/volunteers should maintain Young Star user confidentiality, they should not disclose *Young Star* user names, whereabouts or occupancy details to any third party without their expressed permission, or prior agreement. This includes other *Young Star* users, family, friends, etc. however the following can be acceptable and necessary;

* Information can, and sometimes should, be shared within the *Young Star* Mentoring team.
* However consideration should always be given to the necessity for disclosure of information.
* *Young Star* users must be made aware that any information relating to illegal activity and/or safeguarding concerns cannot be kept confidential
* Information can be shared if there are safeguarding concerns and concerns about risk to the *Young Star* user or others by the *Young Star* user.

**RELATIONSHIPS/CONDUCT WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONALS**: The maintenance of professional relationships with partner agencies and individuals is essential to ensure that *Young Star* users obtain the best possible support and mentoring. Staff should:

* Always remember that they are representing *Young Star* when working with partner agencies and professionals and therefore should conduct themselves in a professional manner
* Never represent *Young Star* or the people who use Young Star in a negative light.
* It is expected that staff/volunteers will represent *Young Star* and its users accurately, fairly and professionally, bearing in mind issues of confidentiality.
* Staff/volunteers are required to seek clarification from the Executive Director if they are unclear about *Young Star’* approach on particular issues or they disagree with the way in which it conducts its business [(use safeguarding policy for guidance on safeguarding specific concerns](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CSafeguarding%20Policy-%20Young%20Star.docx))

**LONE WORKING**

Within this policy, ‘lone working’ refers to situations where staff/volunteers in the course of their duties work alone with *Young Star* users on certain activities, or they will be physically isolated from other staff/volunteers, or there are other staff nearby but the nature of the activity itself may essentially create isolated areas. These staff/volunteers should take particular note of the guidance below. However *Young Star* Mentoring [Safety Policy](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Claptop%5CDownloads%5CSafety%20Policy.docx) should ensure that any trip or expedition has the appropriate number of staff/volunteers to minimise any lone working situations.

* Where ever possible do not carry out lone working activities and/or keep the time that you are on your own to a minimum.
* Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Executive Director
* Ensure someone knows where you will be working with whom and what time you will finish
* Record any lone working activity including date and time of activity, where the activity took place and details of activity carried out
* Be aware of health & safety, do not take unnecessary risks.
* Keep a mobile phone with you at all times.
* Lone working can leave staff/volunteers vulnerable to allegations, assaults and other safety issues
* There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for all staff/volunteers that could end up in a lone working situation on certain activities such as during climbs and walks.
* There must be an agreed system in place to alert other staff/volunteers in an emergency and this should be recorded
* Staff/volunteers should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances